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THE STORY OF
JESUS
IN VERSE

Frances B. Ashcraft



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To my husband,
who had faith in me,
and
to all who believe
the words of the Holy Scriptures.

F. B. A.

P R E F A C E

This book was written not with the idea of changing the Holy Scriptures, but with the idea that one might understand the Scriptures through the medium of poetry. These poems could be read or presented in groups, such as Christmas Selections, Selections of Faith, Easter Selections, the Miracles and so on.

They could be presented in tableau form, as musical readings, or as dramatic presentations.

GROUP 1. Christmas Selections

Hail, Maiden!	The Shepherds
Mary's Visit	The Wise Men and Herod
Joseph	The Warning to Joseph
The Messiah Is Born	Jesus the Boy

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The Sea Is Stilled	tude
Christ and the Leper	Awake, Lazarus!
	The Blind Men of Jericho

GROUP 3. Easter Selections

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In the Garden of Gethsemane	The Denial
Jesus Before Pilate	Calvary
The Burial	The Resurrection

GROUP 4. Selections

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The Forerunner	The Temptation
The Chosen Twelve	The Death of John the
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THE STORY OF
JESUS
IN VERSE

IN THE TEMPLE

Caesar, the Roman warrior,
Surveyed his Empire with greed,
For the hand of this haughty ruler
Was felt in Jerusalem indeed.

Herod was placed as the ruler
Chosen by Caesar the Great,
Ruling these people of Israel,
Filling their souls with hate.

Long had the sons of Israel
Suffered their hardships and pains;
Sweating and toiling and losing
Their vineyards and farms of the plains.

Many had fully forsaken
The teachings of prophets of old,
Accepting the words of their neighbors,
Lusting for power and gold.

Still others lived with their mem'ries,
Clinging to faith and to prayer,
Trudging to Solomon's Temple,
The blessings of the righteous to share.

Zacharias was one of these faithful
Selected to serve this one day
In the sacred Holy of Holies,
Burning incense while all others did pray.

When lo! there appeared before him
An angel of the Lord on High:
"Neither tremble nor fear, Zacharias,
Nor utter a troubled cry,

"For the prayers of the righteous are answered
When faith and work is done;
Now the Lord has willed thee a blessing,
The birth of a baby son.

"The name of John bestow upon him,
For great as a man he'll be,
Neither tasting nor drinking of wine
But filled with the Holy Ghost he'll be.

"Turning the children of Israel
Away from the sins they have trod,
Preparing the hearts of the people
Back to the Lord their God."

HAIL, MAIDEN!

"Hail! Mary, virgin maiden!
Thou art favored in God's sight;
Blessed art thou among all women."
Thus an angel spoke that night
To this maiden here in Nazareth
Who was troubled in her heart.
"Fear not, Mary," now he uttered,
"Words to thee I must impart.

"Again I say thou art favored
By thy God, the Holy One,
For from thy blessed body
Thou shalt bear God's only Son.
Thou shalt call his name Jesus,
For great shall this babe be;

God hath given him a kingdom
To reign o'er eternally."

Then said Mary to the angel:
"Know that I know not a man?
How can I, a mortal being,
Follow through with such a plan?"
The angel of God then answered:
"God wills it! So it will be!
The power of the Holy Ghost
Shall overshadow thee.

"Knowest thou not thine aged cousin
Elizabeth is now with son?
She whom all thought old and barren
Knows now that His will be done."
Mary pondered all his sayings,
Weighing strong each spoken word.
"Be it unto me according then;
Behold the handmaid of the Lord."

MARY'S VISIT

Mary's joys were overflowing
As her footsteps lightly trod;
She, who had been promised blessings,
Walked with knowledge of her God.

She remembered what the angel
Spoke concerning every truth,
And she trembled at her mission,
She, so gracious; she, a youth!

Soon she left the little village,
Nazareth of Galilee,
Went into the hillside country
With Elizabeth to be.

When the aged cousin saw her,
There was joy within her breast,
And the baby leaped within her
By the Holy Ghost was blest.

Her voice was filled with gladness;
Such a greeting then was given:
"Blessed art thou among all women;
Blessed is the fruit within."

These two women felt united;
Theirs was righteous ecstasy:
"I am honored that the mother
Of my Lord should come to me."

Then Mary spoke most reverently:
"My soul doth magnify my Lord,
Blessed by my God, my Saviour,
I obey His every word."

Three months did she linger,
Sharing work and joy and love,
These two women blest divinely
By the Father from above.

JOSEPH

Though much has been spoken of Mary,
Little or naught is known
Of the man who loved her most dearly,
And wanted her for his own.

For he was man of labor,
Earning his keep by his hands,
Building the homes of the villagers,
Preparing the needs of the lands.

He who was chosen most worthy
To shoulder the burdens and cares
Placed on the head of this maiden
Sought solace and comfort through prayers.

Oft he had watched her footsteps
As she trudged down Nazareth's streets,
Shopping or helping her neighbors,
This maiden, untouched by deceit.

He knew in her smile there was laughter;
He knew in her heart there was truth;
He knew that he loved her most dearly,
And wanted to share of her youth.

Then came a day of great sadness
When Mary left Nazareth's streets,
No longer did he hear her sweet laughter,
And fears in his heart did creep.

For stories were whispered about Mary,
Tales that he felt were untrue.
Where had she gone? he wondered;
What wrong could Mary e'er do?

Joseph went oft to the Temple;
In righteousness ever he trod,
For he was a true descendant
Of David, once favorite of God.

The weeks passed slowly in Nazareth.
At last his Mary returned;
Now when he saw this young maiden
Confusion within him did burn.

He wanted to hold her so closely,
Her secret from others to keep:
Such were the thoughts of young Joseph
Each night when he lay down to sleep.

Then unto this man of Nazareth
Came a messenger sent of Him,
Saying, "Joseph, fear not to take Mary,
For she cometh to thee without sin.

"Blessed is she whom thou lovest,
Fulfilling a great prophecy,
For that which is in her is sacred;
Begotten of God is he."

Joseph awoke from his dreaming,
Claimed Mary his very own wife;
Loved her and trusted completely,
Adored her throughout all his life.

THE MESSIAH IS BORN

The market place was crowded,
The village homes o'errun,
For caravan and countryman
To Bethlehem had come.
The great command was issued:
No one from tax was free;
To some it meant a day from home,
To others, two or three.

To Joseph up in Nazareth,
It filled his heart with fear;
The journey was too long a one
For her whose time was near.
How could his lovely Mary,
Whom God on High had blest,
Now travel sixty miles or more,
To be taxed like all the rest?

They traveled very slowly,
But Mary ne'er complained
As across the hills of Judah,
And across the Esdralon plain,
The two came ever closer
To Bethlehem, the home
Of their great heritage,
The land where David roamed.

'Twas in this very country
That David watched his sheep,
Where Ruth, who married Boaz,
Had gleaned in fields of wheat.

Now, as they traveled onward,
In Mary's heart there stirred
The old familiar sayings
Of the ancient prophet's word.

"That out of this small village,
Unheralded and forlorn,
Would come the King, their Saviour."
My son will soon be born,
Thought Mary very clearly
As they entered Bethlehem.
"Please seek our shelter, Joseph,
At the little village inn."

She waited for his answer,
But the look which filled his eyes
Was one of disappointment,
For he seemed to realize
That pain was surging forward
O'er her so chosen, blest.
The journey had been tiring;
His Mary needed rest.

Again he sought for lodging,
But the answer e'er was no,
Until one humble keeper said,
"Let me my stable show.
It's sheltered from the night winds;
There's clean straw for the floor.
If we were not so crowded, friend,
I would gladly offer more."

But Joseph knew that Mary,
Bless her, would ne'er complain.
He spread the clean warm blankets
And tried to ease her pain.

He laid her down so gently,
Then bowed his head in prayer;
"O Lord, please bless my loved one."
Yes, surely Joseph cared.

When Mary heard the infant
Make his first earthly cry,
Her face beamed with a radiance
Like the angels wear on high.
How sweet and peaceful now He lay
Wrapped warm in swaddling clothes;
How humble, too, was Joseph
As from the floor he rose.

He opened up the stable doors;
He raised his eyes above—
Both felt the awe, the wonder,
Of the Lord's great tender love.
There shone a star above them,
A beacon shedding light—
They knew the sign was given
Of the Messiah's birth that night.

THE SHEPHERDS

As Joseph stood there in the doorway
And gazed on the star above,
Out on the rolling hillsides
Shepherds saw signs from above—
Signs which the prophets had uttered,
Signs from His teachings they knew,
For seeking were the people of David,
Praying for the Saviour of the Jews.

These were the men who were shepherds,
Tending their flocks through the night,
Men who were humble and hopeful,
Saw wonders of God that night.
For there in the midst of the shepherds
An angel of God did appear,
Standing so brightly before them,
Saying to each, "Have no fear.

"Behold, I bring you good tidings."
With awe they heard every word.
"Born in the city of David
Is a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.
This shall be a sign unto you
When ye seek the child this day;
He shall be wrapped in swaddling clothes
Lying in a manger of hay."

Suddenly the heavens were opened;
The shepherds heard the great song
Sung by the angels of Heaven—
Multitudinous was this great throng.

Glorious was this choir from heaven
Praising God's glory again:
"Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace, good will toward men."

While the angels of heaven were singing,
The shepherds knelt down to pray;
Rising, they gazed o'er the hillside,
Hoping their sheep would not stray,
While they to the village then hastened
Their Messiah, their Saviour, to see.
They entered the door of the stable,
Then fell on each bended knee.

They worshiped this child of the Heavens;
The Mother, with face full of love;
They told in voices most reverent
Those signs which had come from above.
They left when their story was finished.
Back to the hillside they came,
Relating to all of their wonders,
Praising God and His Holy Name.

THE WISE MEN AND HEROD

Like the shepherds of Bethlehem's hillside,
Others had seen this great star;
Men who were filled with great wisdom,
Wise men of the East, from afar.
They who had studied their records
Knew of the prophets of old,
Had learned of the ancient of Israel,
Recalled now the stories oft told.

How unto the people of Judah
A Saviour, a King of the Jews,
Would rise up to rule o'er the people,
Teaching to them all of the truths.
With haste now they gathered their servants,
Brought treasures of wealth with them
To lay at the feet of this ruler,
When homage they paid unto Him.

They entered the gates of Jerusalem,
Inquiring of all they did meet:
"Where is He that is born King over Judah?
We've followed his star from the East.
We bring unto him our great treasures,
Spices and myrrh and gold,
Frankincense, too, is our tribute."
Such were the sayings they told.

Herod, the chosen from Caesar,
Heard of the men from afar,
Heard also the birth of a Saviour,
Listened to tales of the star.

Jealousy filled him completely;
Anger within him ran wild.
Out went the soldiers he trusted,
Seeking this newborn child.

They searched every house in the city,
Every stable, every store, everywhere—
When they returned to their ruler
Their hearts were filled with despair.
Herod, the haughty, the wicked,
Stalked madly through room after room,
Cursing the Jews and their nation,
Plotting their death and their doom.

Then, in a fit of wild temper,
He rushed to his soldiers to cry:
"I bid you to slay every infant!
Yea, all Jewish babies must die!"
When the wise men heard the great shouting,
They dared not return and make known
That they had seen the Messiah,
Had worshiped and claimed Him their own.

THE WARNING TO JOSEPH

The Spirit of God was present,
Unseen by the human eye,
Yet close to the babe born of Mary;
Ever He stood near by.

He knew of the wicked ruler,
Herod, and his murderous schemes;
He knew that the hour soon cometh
When Joseph must be warned in a dream

To gather his family unto him,
For safety was not to be found
Here in the village of Bethlehem,
Nor here in the country around.

"Arise and take up the infant;
To Egypt your loved ones must flee,
For Herod still seeketh the baby;
His death is not yet to be."

Joseph awoke from deep slumber,
Helped Mary wrap Jesus with care,
Then softly they walked through the village,
Each silently offering a prayer.

Southward they walked through the country
Where robbers and bandits did hide;
Deep was their faith as they traveled
That God walked along by their side.

They lived in the land of Egypt
Until the death of the king,
Then once again came the angel,
And to Joseph this message did bring:

"Take the young child and his mother
Back home now to Israel's lands,
For they that sought once to kill him
No longer shall raise up their hands."

So back to the village of Nazareth
Went Joseph, Mary, and the lad,
Back to his work as a carpenter,
Back to the home they once had.

JESUS THE BOY

So little is told of our Saviour
After Joseph and Mary returned
Back to the land of their heritage,
Where deep-rooted love in them burned.

For here in the hills of Judea,
Here, close to the beautiful sea,
Where the trees and the flowers bloomed sweetly,
Here were their hearts so free.

Yes, here in the village of Nazareth
Jesus grew as the other lads did,
Going each day to the synagogue,
Doing those things he was bid.

He wrote in the sand His lessons;
He studied while the days were long;
He knew of the prophets of Israel;
In all He grew and waxed strong.

He prayed as his mother had taught him,
And the Spirit of God did rest

On the youthful son, the Begotten—
A Nazareth boy most blest!

In the spring when the trees were budding
And the hills with flowers did bloom,
These people, the children of Israel,
Tidied their houses and rooms.

For soon came the feast of the Passover,
And soon o'er the road they would trod,
Back to the city of Jerusalem,
Where homage was paid to their God.

Joseph and Mary had promised
That He, though a lad of twelve,
Should journey with them to the city,
Should partake of this glorious wealth.

No doubt, as He walked down the hillsides,
Or through the villages and towns,
He walked with the ancients of Israel,
In His heart He knew of this ground.

Did tears of joy trickle downward,
When the Temple at first He did see?
Was His heart full of rapture, of reverence?
Did He reason the things to be?

These are the questions unanswered,
But this the Bible does say,
While others were still with their parents,
Jesus from Mary did stray.

When Mary and Joseph had finished,
And the Passover time had fled,
Homeward they traveled with others;
Little between them was said.

For such had been a great privilege,
Words were not spoken aloud;
They pondered the words of the rabbis,
Though they traveled home with a crowd.

When night had come in upon them,
And each was weary for sleep,
Mary questioned Joseph about Jesus;
Bewildered, they turned now to seek.

But no one had seen the boy Jesus,
So Mary and Joseph returned
Back to the gates of the city;
Anxiety in Mary's breasts burned.

How could he have entered the Temple,
Where the learned alone did speak?
Had He, a mere lad, forgotten?
However, 'twas here they did seek.

Amazement was written so plainly
On the faces of these learned men,
For here was a boy, a true scholar,
Teaching of great things to them.

Mary as a mother was troubled;
She was tired and weary and worn;
The words which she spoke unto Jesus
Were tinged just a bit with scorn.

But Jesus, so full of great wisdom,
Spoke gently with her, now he pled;
And Mary His mother was humbled
At the words which her son now said:

*"How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not
That I must be about my Father's business?"*

THE FORERUNNER

When Pontius Pilate ruled over
The plains known as Judea's rich lands,
There came forth a voice, crying,
"Repent, for the Kingdom's at hand."

Zacharias, his father, had reared him,
As the angel declared long ago,
Away from the eyes of his neighbors,
Away from all pomp and all show.

He who had lived on wild locusts,
Who ate of the honey of the bees,
Who kept the laws of a Nazarite,
Came forth as a wind in the trees.

He preached of baptism, of repentance,
He cried: "Confess of your sins!
Prepare ye the way of the Master!
Let Him who is righteous come in!"

The people had longed for a prophet,
One who was called forth by God,
For the years that had passed were many
Since holy men with them had trod.

They followed this man from the desert;
They spoke and respoke every word;
They questioned his truths and his wisdom;
They pondered the things which they heard.

For his was a plea to the nations
To share of the things which they owned,
To give unto those less fortunate
Of their food and their clothes and their homes.

He stayed by the shores of Jordan
Baptizing those willing to be
Led down to the depths of the river;
Called John the Baptist was he.

"Indeed I baptize you with water;
But there cometh one mightier than I,
Whose shoes I am not worthy to loosen,"
Aloud this forerunner did cry.

"He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost;
He will sift out the chaff from the wheat;
He will gather the righteous together.
Prepare ye this Master to meet."

Then unto the river came Jesus;
He walketh from Galilee.
And John, when he saw his Saviour,
Cried, "I have need to be baptized of thee!"

But Jesus knew of the reason
Why He must, like them, be led
Down to the waters of the Jordan.
Turning to John, now He said:

*"Suffer it be so now: for thus it becometh us
To fulfill all righteousness."*

Straightway the heavens were opened,
The Spirit of God descended like a dove,
And a Voice from the heavens then spaketh
So clearly, so full of rich love:

"This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

THE TEMPTATION

*"It is said, Thou shalt not tempt
the Lord thy God."*

High on a rugged hilltop,
The Master sought relief
 From cruel red lips
 And foolish hearts
Who chided his beliefs.

His heart was heavy-laden,
For so much He had to give
 To hardened hearts
 And foolish prides—
His was the way to live!

It was peaceful on the mountain
As He sat down now to rest.
 O taunting eyes!
 O sneering lips!
Each one I could so bless!

He gazed out o'er the valley
As the sun rose high above—
 Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
 Ye foolish ones!
My heart is full of love.

He knelt now in communion
With His Father who would hear
 The words of love,
 The strength of faith—
His power ever near!

He stayed here in the mountains
For forty days and nights.

O favored Son!

O Holy One!

Thy faith so full of light.

Then to him came the Tempter;
The Saviour knew this man.

Ye wicked one!

Ye sinful one!

How evil are your plans?

By Satan was He tempted
With bread, empires, and gold.

Ye foolish one!

Ye hardened one!

So taunting, proud and bold.

*"Get thee behind me, Satan; for
it is written, Thou shalt worship
the Lord thy God, and Him only
shalt thou serve."*

BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD

When the days of temptation were over,
And Jesus to the valley now came,
He met John the Baptist still preaching,
Acknowledging all evil and shame.

The two who stood near him a-listening
Were amazed when John turned and said:
"Behold ye! The Lamb of God cometh!
The wisdom of God doth He shed.

"This is the one of whom I spoke,
Saying, 'There cometh one greater than I.'
Behold the Lamb! Yea, the Son of God!"
Thus did John's very soul testify.

Andrew, the brother of Simon,
Listened to John's wondrous words,
Trembled with deepest emotions,
For great were the sayings he heard.

The other young man who was with him
Came also from Galilee.
When questioned, "Rabbi, where dwellest thou?"
Christ saith to them, "Come and see."

They walked with the Master untiringly;
They questioned him over again.
Christ taught them the meaning of "Saviour"—
All truths to them were made plain.

Andrew sought Simon, his brother;
"We have found Christ, the Anointed One.

Lay aside thy nets for the morrow,
With me, I beg thee, now come."

Together they came forth to Jesus.
So deep were the Master's words sown:
"Thou art Simon, the son of Jonah," said He.
"Thou shalt be called Cephas," meaning a stone.

Philip, who lived in Bethsaida, was seen
As the group traveled toward Galilee.
The three avid followers were pleased when
Christ spake to him, "Follow me."

Nathanael was a friend of young Philip;
Besieged by demands was he:
"We have found Him of whom Moses did speak
Anointed the Christ is He!"

But Nathanael was only bewildered;
He listened while Philip still pled.
"The prophets of old wrote about Him—
'Tis Jesus of Nazareth," he said.

Nathanael now looked at young Philip;
Pity filled both of his eyes:
"Can any good thing come from Nazareth?"
There was hatred and scorn in his cries.

Still Philip was not to be stifled,
Nor put off by words such as these:
"I beg thee to follow, Nathanael."
Such were the disciple's great pleas.

Jesus saw Nathanael, and saith:
"Behold an Israelite in whom is no guile!"

Surprised now, Nathanael questioned:
"Whence knowest thou me?" Jesus smiled.

"Before Philip called thee, I saw thee,
When thou wast under the fig tree."
"Master, thou art the Son of God!" cried Nathanael.
"Yea, the King of Israel I see!"

THE MIRACLE AT CANA

In the little village of Cana,
So close to the beautiful sea,
A maid and her lover were planning
Their marriage with sheer ecstasy.

Their friends and neighbors and kinfolds
Were eagerly awaiting the day,
And Mary the Mother of Jesus
Had come to Cana to stay.

For a wedding is something important
To every young maid and her man;
There is many a problem to alter;
There is so much labor to plan.

And the girl from the village of Cana
Was nervous, excited and shy;
The days might have slipped away slowly,
But for her each moment did fly.

The Mother of Jesus was puzzled,
When the wine for the guests was gone,

But seeing her son and his followers,
Swiftly to him she did come.

"They have no wine," she whispered.
His power was greater than all.
A mother whose faith was unmeasured
Stayed by this son, standing tall.

*"Woman what have I to do with thee?
Mine hour is not yet come."*

But Mary knew this young Master,
Called each of the servants to come near;
"Whatsoever He saith to you, do it"—
Each word so distinct and so clear.

"Fill the waterpots with water."
The servants did as He bid.
"Draw out now and bear unto the Governor."
Quickly His commandment they did.

Amazed were these servants when pouring,
For wine, not water, was seen—
And the miracles of the Master were started
At the lovers' wedding scene.

RIGHTEOUS ANGER IN THE TEMPLE

When Jesus and His disciples left Cana,
Mary His Mother left too.
Together they came to Capernaum,
By Galilee's waters so blue.
They tarried not long in Capernaum,
For the Jews' Passover was at hand,
And the city of Jerusalem was gayest,
Gathered were the people of the land.

Once more there were feasting and singing,
So great had the occasion become;
When Jesus first entered the courtyard,
His thoughts were stricken and numb.
The sight which here He did vision
Was uncouth, was rude, and defiled
The sacred rites with its offerings;
All around was much sin and much guile.

The priests and the leaders were shouting,
Selling at high cost their own wares,
Changing the coins of the people;
Polluted by sin was the air.
Jesus braided the ropes He had gathered,
Making a whip long and strong,
Then boldly He stepped to the Temple,
Lashing the backs of the throng.

He o'erturned the tables of money,
Freed the animals and each little bird,
Then drove the priests from the Temple.
In anger He then spoke these words:

*"Take these things hence; make not my Father's
house a house of merchandise."*

When the cleansing of the Temple was over,
The people drew near to this man,
Questioning, "What sign shewest us?"
Jesus answered and said unto them:

*"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will
raise it up."*

But the Jews understood not His sayings—
Recalled now their labors and strife,
How forty-six years had been given
To build this Temple, their life.
Some followed this man called Jesus,
After the Temple was cleared,
Through the long narrow streets of the city.
They listened, more wisdom to hear.

AT JACOB'S WELL

Anger had swelled in the leaders
Whom Jesus had rebuked that morn
There in the Temple's courtyard,
And revenge in each had been born.

They gathered together in meetings,
Plotting the death of this Jew,
For hatred and malice ran rampant;
All evils were thought of to do.

But up in the northern section,
Round the shores of the Galilee Sea,
People had listened sincerely,
Had visioned the things to be.

Christ and His followers went northward,
Away from Jerusalem's scorn,
Following the trails of the merchants
Leaving the city at dawn.

The journey was long and tiresome;
The land of the desert was hot;
They rested whene'er they found shelter
From the sun and its rays so hot.

They cometh to a city called Sychar
Near an acre of ground, long ago
Given by Jacob to Joseph—
These people, I'm sure, we all know.

The well that was known as Jacob's
Was near to the dusty road,
Where travelers could stop for a moment,
And animals find relief from their load.

'Twas here that Jesus now tarried,
While into the village ahead
His disciples hastened onward,
In search of fresh meat and of bread.

Most Jews, whenever they traveled
Came not by Samaria's way,
For each nation hated the other,
Had nothing between them to say.

As the sun rose slowly above her,
A women had hurried this way,
To draw water for her many duties,
Before the heat of the day.

She saw Jesus, His eyes closed, resting.
She knew by His clothes He was a Jew,

So quickly she lowered her bucket,
Intent on her duties to do.

But Jesus of Nazareth watched her,
Then softly His lips formed the words:
"Give me to drink." She was startled.
"With mine ears have I heard?"

She thought for a moment, then questioned:
"How is it thou, being a Jew,
Askest drink of me of Samaria?
Thou knowest we deal not with you."

*But Jesus answered her, saying, "If thou
knewest the Gift of God, and who it is that
saith to thee, give me to drink; thou wouldest
have asked of Him, and he would have given
thee living water."*

Further she questioned the Master,
For his words she could not understand,
And Jesus, always the teacher,
Unfoldeth to her every plan.

The woman of Samaria then answered:
"Sir, give me this water, that I
Might thirst not nor come hither to draw."
But Jesus looked again and replied:

"Go, call thy husband and come hither."

Her eyes were now lowered downward;
Her cheeks became flushed and red;
The words which she spoke were simple:
"I have no husband," she said.

Jesus answered her: "Thou hast well said, I have no husband."

"Oh, sir, I perceive thee a prophet.
In this mountain our fathers did come
To offer their sacrifices and worship.
Why sayest that we have done wrong?"

"Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father; ye worship ye know not what."

"I know that the Messiah cometh.
Christ is His name to be.
He will tell us of all things," she spake.
Jesus said, "I that speak unto thee am He."

The disciples came now from the village,
While the woman of Samaria fled
Back to her village of Sychar,
Where with neighbors now she pled.

Soon after she left them they hurried
To Jacob's well by the road,
Stood huddled together, listening,
While wisdom did Jesus unfold.

THE NET OF FISHES

Jesus lingered not in Samaria,
Walked northward in the cool of day,
For He visioned the deep blue waters
Of Galilee, where He longed awhile to stay.
He loved this beautiful region
With its wild flowers everywhere;
The green rolling hills that sloped so gently,
And the fragrance of spring that filled the air.
In the village the Master rested,
While Simon went down to the sea
To gather more fish for a season,
So that he with Christ could longer be.

All night the two brothers labored,
But nary a fish had they caught;
Now weary they washed out their netting,
When another lesson to them was taught,
For Christ came now unto the waters,
Stepped into a boat on the shore,
Talked with the crowd, so eagerly
Waiting to hear His words once more.
When the Master had finished speaking,
He spoke to Simon, now near by:

*"Launch out into the deep, and let down your
nets for a draught."*

"But, Master, we've toiled," was their cry.

However, they did as He biddest,
And watched while their nets did break,
Filled to overflowing now with fishes;
Signs of joy to all they did make.

And James and John came to meet them,
For so great was the catch of these men.
Then Jesus spoke with great fervor:
"Fear not: henceforth shalt ye be fishers of men."

CHRIST AND THE LEPER

True faith of a man unfoldeth
As in the leper of Galilee,
Who, seeing the Master so near him,
Fell down on bended knee,

Begging and crying so humbly,
"Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me
Clean from this dreadful disease.
O Master, Thou can!" was his plea.

Jesus was moved with compassion,
Thought deep as He put forth His hand.
"I will; be thou clean," He uttered,
Then gave the leper this command:

"See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them."

But the leper, so full of good tidings,
Sought all his kinfolk to see
How the Man of Nazareth had blessed him,
A leper from Galilee.

The praise which the leper gave Jesus
Brought crowds of people to Him,
Begging, beseeching, and crying
To be healed as the leper had been.

Jesus no longer could worship
In the synagogues or Temple so fair;
He withdrew now to the wilderness
Communed with His Father through prayer.

THE BEATITUDES

I like to think of that morning,
Far away on that eastern hill,
As a morning so full of bright sunshine
That the sun, like a globe, stood still.

I hear the birds singing sweetly;
I see the boughs of the trees bending low,
Listening while the prayer of the Master
So reverently from His lips did flow.

For Jesus was so full of the Spirit
That his body glowed white as a cloud.
He descended to the foot of the mountain
And was startled to see such a crowd.

How wonderful! This Master, the Saviour,
To stop and to rest awhile,
To sit in the midst of His people,
To listen, to speak, and to smile.

On this land sloping ever so gently
Toward the beautiful shores of Galilee,
'Twas here on this wonderful morning,
I listen while He speaks unto me:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

THE PROPHECY IS FULFILLED

He touched her hand;
 She bowed her head.
So great His power
 She left her bed.
Her fever gone,
 Her pains erased,
Respect and love
 Now filled her face.
She knew the Christ!
 The Son of God!
The Master's ways
 Now she would trod.
Thus Christ had preached
 As He journeyed on.
The sick He healed,
 The weak made strong.
A scribe then spoke:
 "My Lord, with thee
I'll follow whither
 Thou leadest me."

*But Jesus turned and softly
said: "The foxes have holes,
and the birds of the air have
nests, but the Son of Man
hath not where to lay his
head."*

THE SEA IS STILLED

There was calmness on the waters
As He entered now to rest,
Followed by His chosen leaders
On the ship which one possessed.

So the Master found a haven
Where He closed His eyes in sleep,
While the boat was rowed in silence
Where the waters were quite deep.

Soon there came a frightening tempest—
Howling winds and lashing seas—
Causing waves to spray upon them,
Causing fear where faith should be.

As the waves dashed all about them
Each man now began to cry:
“We must waken Him, our Master,
Lest we perish, lest we die!”

So they came unto the Saviour
With their cries and with their fears.
Had the teachings He had uttered
Fallen now on deafened ears?

Did the Master stop to ponder
As He gazed into their eyes?
Was He hurt by lack of trusting?
Quick we know was His reply:

“Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?”

He arose like a true leader
Stilling fears in these His sheep.
He rebuked the winds so raging;
He rebuked the seas so deep.

Then they marveled, saying,
"What manner of man is He
That even the winds obey this Master?
Surely, then, why not we?"

"He is truly our great Master
For He has wiped away all fears."
Now their faces, tanned and hardened,
Were streaked by humble tears.

THE MIRACLES IN GALILEE

Here in the country of Galilee
With its beautiful lake so blue,
Jesus walked through the small cities,
Teaching all those whom he knew.

Their ruler was Herod Philip,
The kindest of Herod the Great's sons.
Here was Jesus of Nazareth,
Beloved by everyone.

For the people knew contentment,
Their kindness and truths did share;
Here He could rest from travels;
Here He could kneel in prayer.

In Capernaum, a certain centurion,
Roman by birth was he,
Respected by all his neighbors,
Came to Jesus with his plea:

"There is one within my household
Whom I loveth as mine own.
I beseech thee heal this servant,
For goodness to me hath he shown."

Jesus listened with compassion
As the centurion now did speak:
"Lord, I am not worthy, but a sinner,
Counted not as of thy sheep.

"Speak only for him, 'Be thou healed.
I know of a surety then
That thou who hast power and glory
Will make this servant well again."

*Christ turned to them and said, "I say
unto you, I have not found so great faith,
no, not in Israel."*

Onward went Jesus of Nazareth,
Healing those afflicted with pain,
Teaching kindness and great mercy
Till he reached the city of Nain.

At the gates of this small village
The apostles each bowed low his head,
For in a coffin which was carried
Lay the body of a lad now dead.

His widowed mother loud was crying.
"Weep not," the Master spoke.

"Young man, I say unto thee, Arise."
And the boy from death awoke.

Fear touched not the hearts of many;
They then glorified God on high:
"Now is a prophet come among us;
God at last has heard our cry."

THE CHOSEN TWELVE

These are they who followed Jesus
As He journeyed through the land;
Men who saw the Christ's great powers
As He healed the ills of man.

These are they whom He did gather
As the country roads He trod;
Men who laid aside their labors
To follow now the Son of God.

Simon whom He renamed Peter—
Strong, impulsive, quick of mind;
Quite unlike his brother Andrew,
So retiring and so kind.

Brothers who had been contented
Casting nets in Galilee,
But who felt the Master's power
When He said, "Come, follow me."

James and John were also partners,
Stalwart sons of Zebedee.

James, the first one to be martyred—
John, so young, beloved was he.

Philip's home was in Bethsaida—
Was one to walk mile after mile.
When, in Cana, he met his neighbor
Nathanael, in whom there was no guile.

Thomas, one who always doubted,
Wanting proof to him be shown;
Always questioning, always seeking,
Was fearless when the facts were known

Matthew was perhaps the smartest,
For an education he possessed;
Chosen from the town Capernaum,
He was different from the rest.

He whose duty had been taxing
People from the many lands
Found it easy now to follow—
Known to all as "the Publican."

James the Lesser, so distinguished,
Short of stature, true of heart,
Attracted by the truths of Jesus,
Eager, too, to do his part.

Thaddeus next by Him was chosen.
Also Simon, called "the Zealot."
When they traveled on to Judea,
There they found Judas Iscariot.

He became the group's first treasurer
Buying food and bed at night.
He was trusted, he was friendly,
Doing that which he thought right.

These are they whom Jesus chose now—
Men to walk close by His side;
Men He taught to serve each other,
Men in whom He did confide.

THE DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

The prison bars were made of iron;
The floor was damp and cold;
The straw, oft used, was moldy green—
The man was brave and bold.

The prisoners jeered and cursed him
As he cried so oft to them:
“Repent! Repent! Ye erring ones!
Today cast off your sins.”

Thus John the Baptist sat alone
While others cursed his name,
But through the heavy prison walls
Came news of Jesus’ fame.

For there were those within the city,
A few whom John held dear,
Who brought him food and clothes to wear,
Good news to still his fear.

He sent two of his faithful ones
To follow Christ and see
If He was truly the one who’d come
To set all Judah free.

He heard how blind ones saw again;
How lepers were made whole;
How deaf ones heard, how lame ones walked,
How sinners saved their soul.

While John sat there in prison,
King Herod's court was gay,
For merriment rang through the rooms
To celebrate his day.

Herodias, the Queen, was angry,
For the things which John had said.
She was evil, she was cunning,
With the King she oft had pled:

"There is strength in John the Baptist;
He has caused us all great pain!
Surely now you see the danger—
Surely now you'll have him slain?"

But the King was not revengeful;
He desired no blood be shed.
"We will keep him here in prison;
Let him suffer now," he said.

But Herodias, ever hateful,
Thought now of a different plan.
She was strong and unforgiving;
She would conquer yet this man!

So she went to her young daughter,
Told her words that she should say,
When she danced before her father
And the court guests on this day.

"You will please them, my Salome;
They will ask thee thy desire.
Do not ask for gold nor trinkets."
Herodias' eyes gleamed now with fire.

So Salome danced for the people;
Did not flinch when this she said:
"There is but one thing I pray for—
It is John the Baptist's head."

The King glanced all about him.
He could not refuse this request.
He had boldly offered riches
Here before his friends, his guests.

So he gave the one commandment
To his soldiers standing near:
"You have heard my daughter's wishes.
Bring the prisoner's head in here."

Thus Herodias was triumphant!
She had brought death to the man
Who had known her soul was evil.
She was ruled by Satan's hand.

THE FEEDING OF THE MULTITUDE

Into the desert of Bethsaida
Jesus took His chosen men.
There they told Him of their doings,
What they'd said, and where they'd been.

But the people followed after—
They desired to hear Him speak,
For His words, so filled with power,
Gave great strength to those so weak.

There were cripples, there were beggars,
There were those who came to test.
Each one seeking from the Master,
Each one seeking to be blest.

Thus the Saviour stood before them
Doing miracles, one by one,
Teaching those who sought His wonders
Till the setting of the sun.

"Send these people from thee."
His disciples took their stand.
"It is late and thou art weary.
Send them each unto his land."

But the Master spoke so softly,
"Give ye them to eat."
But they questioned now His wisdom,
Felt rebuked, felt defeat.

"But, our Lord, Thou knowest
We have but a little bread.
Surely now we wonder, Master,
Can these people all be fed?"

Then the Master stood before them,
Took the bread and brake in two,
Also laid the fish before him—
Blessed the food as we should do.

Told each one of His disciples
To feed the people sitting. When
They gathered all left over
There were twelve basketfuls again.

Thus were five thousand persons fed—
Women, children, stalwart men.
And the miracle Christ had shown
Made them strong in faith again.

THE MASTER'S TOUCH

There were poor ones from Bethsaida,
There were those from Galilee,
Who now sought out the Master,
So their eyes be made to see.

Each one praying for a blessing
That his ills be cast aside;
So they gathered now in numbers
All along the countryside.

And the Master, ever humble,
Heard their cries, their every plea;
Laid His hands so very gentle,
Such a One, the Christ, was He!

Blind ones saw again the beauties;
Lame ones cast aside their crutch;
Lepers felt their ills all vanish;
Each one blest whene'er He touched.

Little ones were given blessings
When the Son of God now spoke;
Sick ones rose from beds of sorrow,
From deep sleep they now awoke.

Thus each came to see the Master;
Each one claimed Him for their King;
Each one left when he was blest—now
Praises from their lips did ring.

Jesus taught these "sheep of Israel,"
Fasting, praying all the time;
Urging each to know the Father—
Knowing of Him and His love sublime.

Then He gathered His disciples—
They alone now He must teach,
For the time was fast approaching,
When they alone would go to preach.

Preach with words of depth and meaning;
Preach with deeds and actions too;
Preach to every soul in Israel,
Bringing to this House the truth.

“WHOM DO MEN SAY THAT I AM?”

When the blind man of Bethsaida
Had looked on Jesus' face,
His joy was overflowing
And his heart was full of praise.
But the Master told him clearly
To speak naught of this one deed.
He turned his footsteps homeward
And did not stay to plead.

Then Jesus left Bethsaida;
In silence now He walked.
He heard His twelve Apostles
As they whispered, as they talked.
They had reached Caesarea Philippi
Before the Master said:
“Whom do men say that I am?”
“Some say thou art John the Baptist,
But we know that John is dead.”

“Some say thou art Elias
Returned once more to earth.”
On and on they named the prophets,
Each we know of noble birth.
“But whom do ye say I am?”
Then Peter stepped in closer
As he spoke for all the rest;
“Thou art Christ, the Son of God!”
And each by Him was blessed.

He charged them as they lingered
To tell no man of Him.
He told them how He'd suffer death
And three days rise again.

Impetuous, headstrong Peter
Did not quite understand
How He, the Christ, the Master,
Would suffer so by man.

But Christ, the humble Saviour,
Rebuked him as he should.
He tried so hard to teach these men
And some now understood.

THE TRANSFIGURATION

*"Verily I say unto you, that there be some
of them that stand here, which shall not
taste death, till they have seen the King-
dom of God come with power."*

Six days they heard their Master
Explain great things to them.
Ofttimes they questioned what he said.
Unschoolled were these twelve men.

He spoke of resurrection but
They knew not what He meant;
He spoke of joy hereafter
When the soul from earth is sent.

Then taking Peter, James and John,
He left the other nine,
And went unto a mountain peak;
They tired as they did climb.

The three men sought a place to rest
While Christ stood all alone.
They trembled when His face they saw,
For as the sun it shone.

His clothes were white and brilliant.
Then as they gazed there came
Two other heavenly beings
Who praised the Lord's great name.

'Twas Moses and Elias,
With whom the Christ did talk.
Then Peter rose from where he sat
And toward the three did walk.

"Lord, if thou be most willing,
Let us make altars three,
Where all the world can worship
These holy men and Thee."

But as his voice was lifted,
A cloud o'ershadowed them,
And a mighty voice was speaking:
"This is my Beloved Son. Hear Him."

Then fear came in upon them,
And the three Apostles lay
Upon the ground atrembling,
For sore afraid were they.

*Then Jesus came and touched them:
"Arise, and be not afraid. Tell the vision
to no man, until the Son of Man be risen
again from the dead."*

AWAKE, LAZARUS!

Now a certain man lay dying in the town of Bethany.
He was cared for by his sisters, known as Martha and Mary.

It was Mary who anointed with sacred oil the Master's head,
For He had stopped to visit often and to sup on milk and bread.

With her hair so long and flowing, she had wiped the Master's
feet;
She had loved this Man of Nazareth, listened to His words so
sweet.

Both girls came now to the Saviour, told him of their brother's
pain.
Jesus listened and his message sent them both home once again:

*"This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of
God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby."*

Two days more He lingered, waiting, for Christ the Saviour
knew
The will of God His Father, knew the duty He should do.

Then spake He to His disciples, "Let us go into Judea again."
They were puzzled and they questioned: for the Jews were
seeking Him.

Seeking Him to cast in prison for rebukes which He had said.
Yes, the chosen felt the danger, did not want their Master dead.

But the Teacher ever patient with the cries from these His few,
Now knelt in their midst and prayed for the guidance that He
knew.

*"Our friend Lazarus sleepeth: but I go, that I may awake him
out of sleep."*

Four days Lazarus had been buried in the sepulchre of stone.
Deep within the house was stillness as the sisters sat alone.

Each Apostle felt within him faith and hope once more abide;
Each, renewed with strength and fervor, traveled now by Jesus
side.

Martha heard the noisy clamor of the people in the street,
Drew a shawl about her shoulders, hastened forth the group
to meet.

“O Jesus, Lord! My Master!” Martha fell on knees and cried,
“If thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

“Thou hast taught me how to pray, Lord. Thou hast given faith
to me.
Whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, He will surely give to thee.”

“Thy brother shall rise again.”

Martha looked up now at Jesus as these words fell on her ears:
“It will be as thou hast spoken.” And her eyes were filled with
tears.

*“I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me,
though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth
and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?”*

“Yea, Lord. I believe that thou art Christ, the Son of God,
Who hath come into this world.” Martha turned, and homeward
trode.

At the door she called to Mary: “The Master cometh and calleth
thee.”

Mary rose from where she sat and left the house most secretly.

When at last she came to Jesus, she, too, fell there at his feet.
There was gratitude between them, there was faith and love so
deep.

"Where have ye laid him?" Christ, the friend, felt most bereft.
"Come with us and we will show thee." Then the Master, Jesus,
wept.

"Take ye away the stone."

When they took away the stone from the place where it was
laid,
There were those who felt most humble, there were those who
felt afraid.

Martha's hands clasped Mary's tightly, tears again by them were
shed.
Faith was mixed with prayers and doubtings as they heard what
Jesus said.

*"Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me, for I knew that
thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand
by, I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me."*

"LAZARUS, COME FORTH!"

'Twas the heavens which did rumble! 'Twas the voice of Christ
the King!
'Twas the triumph of the Master! Such a Son! their hearts did
sing.

Lazarus came as He had bidden, face and hands with linen
bound.

"Loose him." Christ had spoken, words which echoed all around.

Thus the Son of God had shown to these people of His land
Powers that the Son possessed, then comprehended not by man.

SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN

The parables were many which He spoke unto the crowds,
Which followed him through cities with their questionings so
loud.

The poor ones sought His blessings, but the rich ones felt
contempt;

The sinners sought repentance while the hypocrites did tempt
Him with their proddings as He lingered in their midst,
Confusing those with hardened hearts with wisdom from His
lips.

The Pharisees came with him as He left green Galilee,
All traveled beyond Jordan to the coast of Judah's sea.
The children gathered near Him as He sat down now to rest;
The crowd had made the journey hard, for against him all had
pressed.

"Stand back!" came Peter's voice, but it fell on deafened ears.

"Stand back!" repeated Peter, but the crowd refused to hear.

A tiny girl rushed past him and stood at Jesus' knee.

She clasped His hands and smiled at Him with lips so lovingly.

Then Peter and the others began to push aside

The tiny girl so fearless, but Christ the Master cried:

*"Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me:
for of such is the Kingdom of heaven."*

He laid his hands upon them as they gathered now to Him,
And blessed them each so lovingly, and through them spoke of
sin.

*"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child,
the same is greatest in the Kingdom of heaven."*

*"Verily, I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as
little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of heaven."*

THE BLIND MEN OF JERICHO

The eyes were made to vision
The beauty of the trees,
To scan the blue horizon,
And to watch the roaring seas.

They were made to dance and sparkle
Like the stars in heaven's sky,
To watch the silvery moon come rising,
Or the brilliant sun pass by.

They were made to gleam and glisten
Like the newly fallen snow,
When the rays of morning sunshine
Cast their ever radiant glow.

Yes, the eyes were made for seeing
Mountain peaks and desert sands,
The tall and stately aspens,
Or the flowers of foreign lands.

Sat there now two blind men,
By the road to Jericho,
Who had heard of Jesus' power
And the blessings He bestowed.

"Have mercy on us, Master,
That we two blind might gaze
Upon the beauties of our own"—
Then each beheld His face!

It was shining with compassion;
It was wise, so full of peace;
It had warmth and love and kindness,
Which made all hate and anger cease.

What a wondrous blessing given
To behold the Son of God,
More beautiful than all of nature,
More beautiful than earth's rich sod.

"O Lord, thou Son of David,"
The blind men each did cry,
"How merciful to each you've been
Thou Son of God on High."

THE TRAIL OF PALMS

There was tumult in Jerusalem
Where the kings and rulers dwelt.
At the council of the Pharisees
Fear by each of them was felt.

As they sat around the table,
Speaking of the many deeds
Done by Jesus Christ of Nazareth,
Satan cast his evil seeds.

Seeds of hatred and confusion
In these learned minds of men,
Filled their souls with deep temptation,
Leadeth each one down in sin.

"Kill this leader!" whispered Satan
Unto every Pharisee.
"Yea," their hearts did answer boldly,
"For he gaineth more than we.

"Soon the Romans will come upon us,
Taking all that we have gained,
Taking captive all our people;
Surely then this man's to blame.

"Can we stand so firmly rooted,
Letting such a man go free?
We must plan our future, brethren,
For the cause is just to me."

Thus cried Caiaphas of the Temple
(He was numbered with these men),
"We must kill this man of Nazareth
Lest our children die of sin."

Thus conniving was this council.
A commandment did they give
Unto every Jew of Jerusalem:
"Christ shall no longer live."

Therefore Jesus left the city,
Hunted now on every hand,
Went into a town called Ephraim
With his stalwart, chosen band.

Soon would start the Jews' Passover.
Jesus knew His time drew near,
So he came to the town of Bethany,
Stayed with those He held most dear.

Lazarus welcomed Christ the Master,
Made His stay a pleasant one;
Mary, too, was proud to serve Him,
For the greatness He had done.

Mary brought forth precious ointment.
She had kept this rich perfume;
Now she washed the Master's feet
While its fragrance filled the room.

Judas Iscariot stepped forth boldly,
Then in anger loud he raved,
"Why was such a precious ointment
Kept and hidden by this maid?

"It would sell well at the market,
For it's valued as a prize.
Money then to the poor be given.
Thou art sinful in my eyes."

But the Master, ever gently,
Looked on Mary favorably,
Watched her as her lips now trembled,
Watched her eyes fill with a plea.

*"Let her alone: against the day of my
burying hath she kept this. For the poor
always ye have with you, but me ye have
not always."*

On the next day came more people
Who had heard. "Soon cometh He
Into the city gates to honor,
Then our King will Christ soon be."

So they gathered large green palm leaves,
Lined up now the country road,
Waited patiently for hours,
Until Christ at last now rode

On an ass from Lazarus' village,
While His friends walked by His side.
"Hosanna to the Son of David!"
Praises from the crowd were cried.

"Blessed is the King of Israel.
He is come in our Lord's name.
Hosanna! Glory in the Highest!
Peace in heaven is now proclaimed!"

Thus the trail of palms was strewn
By the people on that day—
People from the towns He'd gathered,
Those He'd loved and taught to pray.

THE LAST SUPPER

Peter and John had listened
To the words that Christ had said,
Then doubting not a single thing
Their footsteps now did tread

Across the hills and mountains.
For when each day was o'er,
They had returned to Bethany's village,
Still hunted as before.

The Pharisees were cunning;
Their plan was yet to slay
The man proclaimed by many,
But not on this, their Festive Day,

So Jesus had been preaching
Within the Temple walls,
Still tempted by these wicked men
Who had no faith at all.

Thus when John and Peter
Had been told to seek a room,
They thought not of the future
Nor of their Master's doom.

The supper was made ready,
Both men waited patiently,
Then came this man of Nazareth—
So humble now was He!

He took a pan of water,
Washed each disciple's feet.
He showed his great affection
And humility complete.

*"With desire I have desired to eat this
passover with you before I suffer, for I
say unto you, I will not any more eat
thereof, until it be fulfilled in the King-
dom of God."*

They ate and discussed freely
The problems now at hand.
Christ must have wondered in his heart,
"How faithful is my band?"

"Have I, their Master, taught them
To sacrifice their all?
How great is each man's courage?
Which one of these will fall?"

"Each little deed and action,
Will they remember still,
When I at last have left them?
When I am on that hill?"

He glanced at John and Peter.
He loved each single man—
Nathanael, Thomas, Andrew—
But it was time now for the plan.

Oh, wondrous was the Saviour
As He sat among His men.
He broke the bread, He filled the cup,
Then spake He once again:

*"Take this cup, and divide it among
yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not
drink of the fruit of the vine, until the
Kingdom of God shall come. This cup is
the new testament in my blood which is
shed for you."*

Of the bread, He said:

*"This is my body which is given for you:
this do in remembrance of me. But
behold, the hand of him that betrayeth
me is with me on the table."*

A silence swept across the room
As each sat now in fear.
Could it be James? Andrew? or Peter?
Or even John, so dear?

Perhaps 'twas doubting Thomas?
His face was pale and wan.

Nathanael? No! Not Matthew?
Each wondered now, "Which one?"

"Lord is it I?" they questioned,
And His gaze fell on the bread.
"Master is it I?" hesitated Judas.
Christ replied, "Lo! Thou hast said."

Then Satan entered Judas,
He rushed from out the room.
Christ closed his eyes a moment,
His words had sealed His doom.

IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE

In the Garden of Gethsemane
The Saviour went to pray,
To ask His heavenly Father
To guide Him along the way.

For His heart was filled with sorrow,
Overflowing to the brim.
Even now while He was praying
There was one betraying Him.

Yeal 'twas quiet in the Garden;
The stars shone high o'erhead,
As our Saviour knelt in solitude,
There was faith in what He said.

"O my Father, if thou be willing,
Remove this cup from me.

Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done."
So wise, so pure was He.

There He lingered in the Garden
With the darkened shadows deep.
When He cometh to His disciples,
He findeth each asleep.

"Could ye not watch one hour?"
These words He kindly spoke.
Then went back to the Garden,
And none of them awoke.

Yea! 'twas quiet in the Garden
When an angel from above
Came to strengthen His great spirit,
Came to fill His heart with love.

Then again He prayed, our Saviour,
In the Garden of Gethsemane,
Sweating as it were great drops of blood,
Suffering, yea! for you and me.

THE DENIAL

"Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him."

This statement was quietly spoken,
When Judas in haste had fled,
Each of the Apostles sat pondering,
For powerful were the words Christ said.

*"Little children, yet a little while I am with you,
ye shall seek me; and as I said unto the Jews,
whither I go, ye cannot come."*

"Wither thou goest, my Master,"
Peter their leader then spake,
"There shall I follow thee humbly.
I will lay down my life for thy sake."

*"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, the cock shall not
crow till thou hast denied me thrice."*

Peter was hurt by this saying,
Denied it most vehemently.
"Oh, no! Not I, My Master!
Never shall I deny thee!"

Jesus argued not with bold Peter;
Instead told of things ahead,
Urged them to sacrifice fully,
To see that "His sheep" were led,

Led into the paths most righteous;
His commandments by them ever kept.
Then as they left the gay city,
Again o'er Jerusalem, He wept.

He walked across the brook called Cedron,
Came into the Garden close by.
Here, in the quiet of evening,
He prayed to His Father on high.

The stillness of night was broken
By the abuses and shoutings of men
Who likewise had crossed over Cedron
Led by Judas, deep-rooted in sin.

In the bag he jingled the money;
The sound brought a smile to his face;
Thirty pieces of round, gleaming silver,
Paid for revealing Christ's place.

For Judas had been in the Garden,
Had felt the contentment and peace
That moved through the trees and the flowers,
Where time and all worry did cease.

Urged now by the Pharisee leaders,
With their lanterns and torches held high,
His emotions had risen within him
Till he thought, "Now a leader am I!"

Christ heard the disturbance of voices,
Knowing it was He whom they sought,
And came from the Garden's calm refuge,
And stood by the men Judas brought.

"Whom seek ye?" said Jesus of Nazareth.
"The Christ! Where is He?" they cried.
Judas stepped forth from the others,
Stood close now at Jesus' side.

He kissed him while those about him
Watched in amazement the scene.
"Betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?"
Came the voice of the Master, serene.

The crowd of Pharisees drew nearer;
Simon raised the sword in his hands,
Smote off the ear of Malchus, the servant,
Who had shouted to all the command:

"Seize him!" And strong arms were lifted
As Jesus looked at Peter and said,
"Put up thy sword in its sheath."
And restored Malchus' ear to his head.

Christ was bound by the raging captains
And led unto Annas, the Jew,
Who presided over the people.
Harsh arguments now did ensue.

Annas summoned his son-in-law Caiaphas,
The High Priest of the Temple that year,
To reckon with the crowd and its problem,
And Caiaphas was proud to be near.

Simon Peter had followed the Saviour,
Lingering back from the rest of the crowd,
Came now to the door of Caiaphas,
Fearing the threat'nings so loud.

As Simon stood back in the shadows
A damsel approached and stood near,
"Art thou not this man's disciple?"
Peter's heart turned cold now with fear.

"I am not!" spoke Peter with fervor
As he hastily made his retreat.
But the eyes of the damsel appraised him—
She knew that he suffered defeat.

The servants and officers of Caiaphas
Had built a fire, for the wind
Was cold as it covered the city.
Simon Peter drew near unto them.

Again came the question to Peter,
"Art not thou a friend of this man?"
"Nay, I am not!" came the answer
As Peter close by them did stand.

"I'm positive I've seen you before, sir.
Perhaps in the Garden with Him?"
Came the voice of a kinsman of Malchus,
But Peter denied Him again.

As the words left the lips of Peter,
A cock in the distance did crow.
For a moment the eyes of the Saviour
Met Peter's. And Peter at last did know.

For he who was bold and aggressive
Had denied Him, the Master, this night.
"I am no better than Judas!"
He cried as he fled from their sight.

JESUS BEFORE PILATE

Jesus was led like a beggar from the courts of Caiaphus the Priest;
Accursed and reviled by His people, through Jerusalem's rough narrow streets
Into the Hall of the Judgment, where Pilate, the ruler from Rome,
Gave counsel and laws to the people, where hatred and love were both shown.
The sky in the heavens grew lighter, for the dawn of the morning was near.
The cock in the distance was silent and Peter had fled in great fear.
Pilate was awakened from slumber, disturbed by the loud, riotous Jews,
Entered the hall in grave silence, and heard the offenders' untruths.
For the Jews entered not with Jesus, lest they be defiled as He,
For this was their great day of homage, remembered when Israel was free,
Free from the bondage of Egypt, a day most holy to them.
Yet, here in the courtroom of Pilate stood one of their own—condemned.
“Why bring ye this man to be judged?” the voice of Pilate rang clear.
“Take Him before thine own council. There is no need to bring this man here.”
“We cannot,” the Jews said to Pilate. “Our Law forbids us to slay.
And since we do honor thy judgment, we have brought Him to thee this day.”
Pilate went back unto Jesus. “Art thou the King of the Jews?”
“Thou sayest it,” answered the Saviour, His words ringing clear with the truths.

"My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."

Again Pilate went to the window, faced the Jews who waited below.

"I find no fault in this fellow: therefore, I say let him go."

But the people were stirred with anger; deep-rooted, intolerant were they.

"He stirreth the people about us from Jerusalem to green Galilee."

"If He be from Galilee," cried Pilate, "then take him to Herod the King.

He who has full jurisdiction can justice to this problem bring." Herod was glad to see Jesus, for great were the stories he'd heard.

He longed to see the great wonders performed by the man who had stirred

Up the hearts of his people, who had cherished their homes and their peace,

But who had listened to Jesus' lone bidding, "Follow me," and their labors at home had ceased.

So here in the rich, stately mansion, Herod did mock Him, and cry:

"Why stirreth my people, my nation?" But Jesus gave naught a reply.

They scourged Him and took off His garments, arrayed Him in a long purple gown.

They mocked Him with violent outburstings and pleated thorns for a crown.

Then back to the judgment of Pilate, who called for a council of men:

"I find no fault in this stranger. I say ye falsely accuse Him. Ye seek neither justice nor mercy," cried Pilate loudly, with scorn,

To the Jews who milled outside the Temple, and hatred filled each heart that morn.

"I will chastise this Jesus of Nazareth, for sin is not in the man. I beg you to give Him his freedom." Yea, such was Pilate's true plan.

But the cries of the people grew louder. "Release us the prisoner," they pled,

"Known to us as Barabbas, the robber. Kill Jesus of Nazareth instead.

Crucify him who has stated that He is the Son of God, this day, He who doth blaspheme daily and leadeth our children astray." Three times Pilate pled with the people, each time their anger arose.

They demanded their rights be acknowledged. Pilate's pleas they firmly refused.

Then Pilate returned unto Jesus. "Speakest thou not unto me? Surely thou knowest my power to crucify or to see thee go free?"

"Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above; therefore, He that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin."

"Behold the man!" cried Pilate. "Take ye and crucify Him! Burden thy souls with injustice, for I find neither fault nor a sin. Take Him to the edge of the city. List not to the Man's words so true.

Crucify Him!" Pilate trembled. "But hail to the King of the Jew!"

Pilate stumbled back to his chambers, washed his hands of the horrid affair,

For he had shown mercy to Jesus—deep in his heart he had cared,

Cared for the man known as Jesus, a man who begged not for His life,

A man who was ready and willing to sacrifice all for our lives.

CALVARY

The street was narrow
But the cross was strong;
The mob was shouting
As He trudged along
To Calvary!

The people mocked,
And the thorns dug deep
Into His brow
As He trudged the street
To Calvary!

The sun rose high,
Its rays burned deep,
Like His wondrous love,
While the road was steep
To Calvary!

His heart was weary,
His clothes they tore
As they mocked and cursed Him—
Still our burdens He bore
To Calvary!

His mother sobbed;
His friends felt defeat
As the spikes were driven
Through His hands and feet
On Calvary!

The shouting rose
As His blood was shed,
But the King o'er all
To his Father pled
On Calvary!

*"Father, forgive them: for they know
not what they do."*

The thieves that hung
On either side
Rebuked him unjustly,
But He made no reply
From Calvary!

"Remember me, Lord,"
Did one of them pray,
"When thy Kingdom thou
Comest to rule o'er today,"
From Calvary!

*"Verily, I say unto thee, Today thou
shalt be with me in Paradise."*

The sky grew dark,
The mob felt fear,
Some hastened homeward,
A few stayed near
To Calvary!

The Mother named Mary
Knelt weary and worn,
Her heart sad with sorrow
To watch her firstborn
On Calvary!

A friend most true
Stood close by her side,
While Christ on the cross
Looked down and replied
From Calvary:

*"Woman, behold thy son! Son, behold
thy mother!"*

The sky was still darkened,
The ninth hour nigh,
When Christ on the cross
In a loud voice did cry
 From Calvary:

*"My God, my God, why hast thou
forsaken me?"*

He was weak from torture,
But He raised his eyes;
The shouting was over.
His lips, parched and dry
 On Calvary!

"I thirst."

The veil of the Temple
Was rent in twain,
While He hung on the cross
Without a complaint
 On Calvary!

*"Father, into thy hands I commend
my spirit."*

Yes, the price was paid—
Such a costly one!
A world forgiven
By a righteous Son
 On Calvary!

"It is finished!"

THE BURIAL

"Oh, He that was good and righteous,
Oh, He that was truly a friend,
Was nailed to the cross so sturdy—
Hung till the last bitter end."

Joseph of Arimathea came
Before Pilate, the ruler from Rome;
Pleaded with him for the body of Jesus,
That it might lie in his sacred tomb.

Then those who were His disciples,
When all the accusers had fled,
Now lowered His body so gently—
Their Master, their Leader, was dead.

Tenderly they carried His body
To the cave where now it was lain,
Away from the cries of Golgotha,
Away from its echoes of pain.

For Joseph had purchased the cavern,
A sepulchre, clean and unused,
His gift to the Man from Nazareth,
Truly the King of the Jews.

His robes were of purest linen,
Which the women swiftly prepared.
Yes, there in the hills of Judea
Were many who truly had cared.

Nicodemus also had gathered
There with these precious few,
Bringing with him essence of myrrh
For the rites of the friend he once knew.

When the ritual at last was finished,
Each one left for his home,
Concealing the entrance so deftly,
With a large circular stone.

The shadows of evening descended
Over the city, where slept
Those who were tired and weary,
But a few of the faithful still wept.

Wept for the Saviour, the Master,
Who this day had suffered and died,
Wept for the Man from Nazareth,
Whose love some of them had denied.

“Oh, He that was good and righteous,
Oh, He that was noble and true,
Had given His life most freely
For the sins this evil world knew.”

THE RESURRECTION

The streets were deserted
As the young woman trod
Past the city's great markets—
She was seeking her God.

The sky was still dark
As she hurriedly tread
Past the Garden He loved—
Yes, her Saviour was dead.

Mary came to the entrance,
Saw the stone moved aside,
Then she fled in great haste
Unto Peter, and cried:

"They have taken my Lord
From the lone sepulchre.
They have taken my Master,
But I know not where."

Peter then went forth,
When these words he heard,
For fear in his breast
Had also been stirred.

The other disciple
Who with Peter had stayed
Ran as fast as the wind—
He, too, was afraid.

Afraid that their enemies
Had come in the night
To destroy Jesus' body.
Oh, great was their fright!

He that was fastest
 Stooped forward to see
The clothes lying there
 Where the body should be.

Simon Peter and Mary
 Had now reached the tomb;
Peter went forward—
 He entered the room.

The linens were wrapped,
 Placed neatly inside.
Simon Peter was puzzled;
 Mary Magdalene cried.

Then Peter left Mary,
 For she stayed by the stone,
Wept for her Master,
 The man she had known.

She knew not 'twas Jesus
 Who spoke to her now:
"Woman, why weepest?
 Whom seekest thou?"

She thought him a gardener.
 She softly did speak:
"Where have they laid Him?
 'Tis my Master I seek."

"Mary!" said Jesus.
 She turned then to gaze.
"Rabboni! My Master!"
 There was joy on her face.

*"Touch me not: for I am not yet
ascended to my Father: but go to
my brethren, and say unto them, I
ascend unto my Father, and your
Father: and to my God and your
God."*

Mary Magdalene went
With peace in her heart,
Found the other disciples
And Christ's words did impart.

He came to the chosen
That very same night,
Who in secret assembled
From the Jews' hateful sight.

"Peace be unto you!"
To each Christ did speak.
Then He showed them His wounds,
This Saviour so meek.

He breathed on the chosen,
Then quietly said:
"Receive ye the Holy Ghost,
And by Peter be led."

Thomas was absent
From the meeting that night;
He doubted their words
With all of his might.

"Except I shall see
Each print of the nails,
I will not believe
These fantastic tales."

So after eight days,
When each chosen was here
Assembled, once more
The Christ did appear.

*"Thomas, because thou hast seen me,
thou hast believed: Blessed are they
that have not seen, and yet have
believed."*

"FEED MY SHEEP"

Seven days had been numbered
Since the resurrected Christ had appeared
To those who waited in Jerusalem,
To the chosen He loved so dear.

Then word had come to the Apostles:
"I wait in Galilee."
So here in the cool blue waters
They cast their nets in the sea.

'Twas here the Saviour had met them;
'Twas here a miracle had been shown;
'Twas here by the clear blue waters
That a message to Peter was known.

For after the Apostles had eaten,
Jesus turned unto Peter and said:
"Simon, son of Jonas, lovest me more than these?"
And Peter bowed low his head.

For a minute the air was silent.
Then Peter remembered his sin—
How there in the courtyard of Herod
Three times he'd denied knowing Him.

"Yea, Lord, thou knowest I love thee."
Peter's words were humble and low.
"Then feed my lambs," spoke the Saviour,
And the eyes of Peter did glow.

"Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?"
The Lord again questioned him.
"Yea, Lord, thou knowest I love thee."
"Feed my sheep" came the answer again.

Three times came the Saviour's question
To Peter, both pained and grieved.
Did the Lord not trust him to follow?
Did the Lord doubt he still believed?

"Lord, thou knowest I love thee."
Peter's voice so tenderly spoke.
"Feed my sheep" was the message
The Saviour upon Peter invoked.

Three times had Peter denied Him,
And Christ in His great loving way
Had given to Peter the privilege
To confess of his sin this way.

THE ASCENSION

"It is not for you to know the times of the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

When Jesus had spoken to these chosen men,
He smiled at them humbly, for each was a friend.

He was taken to heaven in a cloud so concealed.
Still steadfastly they gazed, then to each was revealed.

For as He was taken two men did appear;
Their apparel so white, it caused each to fear.

"Ye men of Galilee!" to them they did say:
"Why stand ye now gazing unto heaven this way?"

"For He who was taken shall in like manner come
Down out of the heavens, when the judgment doth come."

They turned toward Jerusalem, from Mount Olives then,
Back to the city, these strong, stalwart men.

Eleven true prophets, each one in accord,
Who, with Mary His Mother, prayed now to their Lord.

Two names were submitted; a vote they must face,
For they needed another to fill Judas' place.

Matthias was chosen by this Council of Men
To be numbered as one henceforth with them.

Each man felt the Master's love, had faith in his heart.
Their duty now was to the world the message of Christ to
impart.